

NEWS | **FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE** | April 6, 2021

Department of Environmental Quality urges caution during smoky conditions

BISMARCK, N.D. – The North Dakota Department of Environmental Quality (NDDEQ) advises residents, especially those with respiratory conditions, to consider limiting prolonged outdoor activities in areas affected by local wildfires. Smoky conditions currently exist downwind of a wildfire in Theodore Roosevelt National Park North Unit.

Extremely small particles of ash and soot, or particulate matter, have been increasing over the last few hours in and around Theodore Roosevelt National Park North Unit in northwestern North Dakota. Particulate matter can irritate the respiratory system, especially for those who suffer from chronic obstructive pulmonary disease (COPD) or conditions such as asthma and allergies. The NDDEQ advises people with respiratory conditions, the elderly and young children to avoid prolonged outdoor exposure.

High particulate numbers, coupled with high winds over the next few days, could heighten the complications. People reacting to smoke to the extent that it affects breathing should seek immediate help from a medical provider.

The NDDEQ's Division of Air Quality is closely monitoring its air sampling network across the state. At this time, most of the smoke impact seems to be concentrated in the western part of the state. If conditions in central North Dakota become unfavorable, the department will follow up with additional information.

For up-to-date information on the region's current air quality and tips on respiratory protection during a smoke event, visit https://airnow.gov/index.cfm?action=topics.smoke_wildfires or <http://airnow.gov>.

For more information, contact:

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